

English 1020 Syllabus

Catalogue Description

Writing the longer paper; diction, style, analysis and interpretation of collateral readings leading to the composition of the research paper. Prerequisite: 1010.

Goals and Objectives

English 1020 continues the work of English 1010 and concludes the freshman writing sequence. As of the Fall 2005 the Freshman Writing sequence emphasizes argumentation and, as such, over the next fifteen weeks of instruction we will work on the cultivation of analytical and interpretive forms of writing (evidence-based writing), the form of writing (and thinking) that dominates all types of academic disciplines. Among other things, it is important for you to recognize, even at this early stage of your training, that knowledge in a field never sits still, never remains entirely the same. Your job is to cultivate your mind and to develop cognitive skills that will enable you to contribute to those fields you have chosen to major in; English, whether you love it or hate it, is a means to that end. For one of the amazing things about literature is that it always means more than what it says: that is, it invites inquiry because stories, poems, and plays always stop short of telling us everything we need to know about them.

Goals:

To read, write, and think critically

To write to a specific audience with a sense of style

To use writing techniques that call upon a range of cognitive and written processes

To understand legitimate forms of evidence and to build arguments around them

To speak before the class in an organized and coherent manner

Objectives:

Students will read and respond to a variety of “literary” works, including stories, poems, essays, and visual media.

Students will learn about the importance of verbal nuance and the need to be specific in crafting arguments/interpretations.

Students will experience the stages and states of writing so that the essays they submit best reflect their abilities.

Students will have multiple opportunities to express themselves publicly and learn methods of evaluation as they read or hear about the work others have done.

Text (available at The Demon Bookstore and Campus Corner and probably the University Bookstore)

Sylvan Barnet, et al., *Literature for Composition*, 8th ed. (Pearson Longman, 2005): LC

“Goose-Girl” (available on Blackboard, under Course Documents)

Handouts about writing (available on Blackboard, under Course Documents)

Schedule

The key concept we will work with over the next fifteen weeks is “reading analytically.” In other words, as we read we want to analyze what we read. When we are small children who are just learning how to read, we don’t read analytically. Instead, we simply read the words on the page. Knowing how to sound out those words and figure out their definitions or meanings is the first step in reading. Not the last step. In truth, learning how to read is an ongoing process—it develops as we develop; whether we can ever perfect our reading skills remains up in the air. We can, however, become better readers if we practice those skills that enable us to become better readers. But we can’t become better readers if we believe that being able to sound out printed words and knowing their definitions, more or less, qualify us as mature, analytical readers.

Sometimes readers who are still learning the tricks of the reading trade might comment about what someone says about something read, “That’s deep!” or “You’re reading between the lines.” We know of course that printed words are all surface without any depth and that the only stuff between printed lines is an empty space—whatever “depth” or “between” there is resides in our heads as our ideas—those ideas are the real “depths” and “betweens.” All printed words, especially the kinds that we read in stories or poems, never tell us all we need to know as these words can’t say or communicate everything. To be sure, stories tell us a lot, but they also imply things or hide them from us so that, if we are to understand what an author communicates, we must interpret what that author has laid out before us. Everyday conversation may serve as a useful analogy. You converse with Susie or Joe. Susie and Joe say all sorts of things to you—words you hear—but they also gesture with their hands, stand a certain way, fold their arms in a particular manner, avoid eye contact or sometimes make it, flare their nostrils. Each of these movements means something that can either reinforce what their words communicate or contradict those same words. Accordingly, individual acts of communication turn into occasions for interpretation—in the same way stories do. One other point, when Susie or Joe tells you something, they do so according to their point of view. We need to be careful when we listen to someone’s point of view because every point of view comes with a built-in prejudice. When President Bush makes a speech to the nation, it automatically comes tailored with his point of view. Just because he says this or that, should we believe or embrace what he says?

The readings for the next three weeks are, on the face of things, pretty simple and straightforward, yet they will challenge your skill as readers in a number of ways. The first reading derives from Hebrew Scripture, the second from the New Testament, and the third from the fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm: in short, sacred literature, which invites a hands-off approach, and kiddie lit, which is not worth much attention at all in light of its targeted audience. Each of these stories, I should note, has a distinctive point of view: Solomon's, Jesus', and the Goose-Girl's.

The key to reading analytically calls upon you to read inquisitively—that is, to ask questions and wonder why this particular grouping of words or these details, as opposed to other words or details. The most important dimension of analytical reading is to assume nothing and to challenge everything. Just remember, no piece of writing can ever be entirely innocent. It is also useful to read with a pencil in your hand so that you can mark your text and make annotations.

An important consideration: with matters of interpretation, we never deal with right and wrong answers. Instead, our concerns are with how persuasive we are or can be in defending our line of reasoning or argumentation.

So why is reading important? I'll have Sylvan Barnet, the author-editor of our text, explain why. He says in the first sentence of chapter 1 of *Literature for Composition*, "Learning to write is in large measure learning to read" (3). Now the reading he references is vastly different from the kind of reading you did when you were seven—and it should be because in order to write thoughtfully, we must first be able to read thoughtfully.

Week 1: 12-16 Jan

Introduction; how we read: LC: 3-6; 87-91 (1 Kings: "Judgment of Solomon")

It should be pretty clear to you as you read this passage that its author wants us to believe that Solomon's judgment deserves respect. As you read, however, I want you to think about whether Solomon's judgment actually warrants respect. Is he fair? does he exhibit any prejudices? does the evidence of the story genuinely support our assumption of Solomon as a wise man? why does the story end the way it does? And don't be afraid to come up with questions of your own.

Our **first writing exercise** will be a **collaborative project**, for which you and members of your group will receive a grade (**25 pts**). What I want you to do is to demonstrate your group skills as analytical readers. Here's my proposal: the passage about Solomon is not as simple as it seems. Your job will be to scour the text of the story to point out why the story is not simple. We will start this project in class, but your group submission will not be due (via Blackboard under Assignments) until the Friday of the second week: 23 Jan, no later than 6:30 pm; see below under Electronic Submission how to name the file your group submits. It will be important that members of your group exchange e-mail

addresses so that you can continue to work on and perfect your findings as much as possible. You will also have the authority as a group to establish rules and regulations governing participation and may, if circumstances warrant, diminish the grade of a member or members of your group by as many as 5 points (the equivalent of two letter-grades on a 25-pt. scale) for inadequate participation. The name of each member of the group must appear on the submission; if any member or members is/are to incur a penalty for inadequate participation, then include that information on your submission.

Week 2: 19-23 Jan

Monday: MLK, Jr. Holiday

LC: 1276 (John: “Woman Taken in Adultery”)

I don’t have to tell you that within the Christian tradition Jesus stands as the incarnate God, and the feature that distinguishes the pagan gods or any God from us is that they are different from you and me. Think about this matter: how or in what way does the portrait of Jesus change when we look at his character as God v. his character as man. Pay close attention to Jesus’ act of writing, which may be unique in the New Testament. We can’t know what he writes, but we can certainly wonder about why he writes. And you should too.

Our **second writing exercise** will again be **collaborative** in nature and will deal with **point of view**. Point of view is always a powerful tool because it causes us to forget about others and to fix our eyes on the one who comes across as the victor or champion. Jesus functions in that role in the passage from John’s Gospel. What I want you to contemplate are the other, essentially unheard points of view in the story that deal with the other characters who are not Jesus. What do we need to think about these other characters? It is fair to assume that the scribes and Pharisees, as well as the woman taken in adultery, have had lives before the story and will continue to exist after the story fades to black. If you want to work with the same group as you did for the first writing exercise, fine; if you want to get into a different group, also fine. But the same rules will apply. This exercise will be due (via Blackboard under Assignments) at the end of the third week on Fri, 30 Jan, no later than 6:30 pm (25 pts).

*******Due (Fri, 23 Jan, by 6:30 pm): Collaborative Assignment 1 (25 pts) (follow the naming instructions under Electronic Submission below)**

Week 3: 26-30 Jan

“Goose-Girl” (on Blackboard under Course Documents)

"The Goose-Girl" is one of those embarrassingly simple stories that we associate with childhood. Sometimes "simple" turns out to be fairly complex, however. We won't worry about "complex" for the moment, at least not directly. Instead let's focus our attention initially on the Princess, later Goose-Girl, to get things rolling. Here's a fairly simple question for you: why is she rewarded at the end of the story? To answer that question, don't tell me she's rewarded because she is the heroine of the story and, anyway, all fairy tales end on a happy note. Instead, I want you to rummage around in the story and find out those traits and features that make her a candidate for reward; create a **list** of her traits (you should have **at least five** traits). Of course she is not the only character in the story, so as you try to answer my question, you should also think in terms of those traits and features of other characters that populate the story. You may find that comparing and contrasting the Princess with these other characters will enable you to see her character more clearly. **Bring the list to class on Monday and submit it at the end of class; 5 extra-credit points for a list of 5 traits**, with additional points available for longer lists.)

In discussing "GG," we will want to talk some more about point of view and the kind of sway it has over us. But we will also want to explore those obscurer, overlooked bits in a story that add layers of complexity even to simple tales.

*******Due (Fri, 12 Sept, by 6:30 pm): Collaborative Assignment 2 (25 pts) (follow the naming instructions for your file)**

Week 4: 2-6 Feb

Introductory Paragraph (see [Introductory Paragraph](#) and [Model Interpretive Essay](#) on Blackboard under Course Documents)

This week we will begin with step one of the interpretive/argumentative essay by considering the reading assignments from the first three weeks of the semester as sources for an introductory paragraph. We will talk about the **topic** as a problem and the **thesis** as the solution to the topic-problem.

Week 5: 9-13 Feb

Writing Process and Workshop: bring draft of Introductory Paragraph to class on Monday and its revision on Wednesday

Friday: Begin Poetry

Some people have an irrational dislike of poetry. They will complain that it's too hard or doesn't make much sense. I sometimes muse that people who don't like poetry may not like language at all or believe that language only serves a utilitarian function. "Would

you hand me the car keys, honey?” says the long-married wife to her husband. “Yes, sweetie,” replies the husband, who picks up the keys and hands them to “sweetie,” which is to say, his wife. Language performs a useful function: it facilitates a desired action. And yet in the midst of that performative utterance, we get the stock and trade of poetry: metaphor. The husband in fact is not “honey”—that after all is the regurgitation of bees that collect pollen. No person produces a sweet taste—to be a genuine sweetie—unless that person bathes in a vat of honey or chocolate, but the sweetness would last only as long as the residual traces of honey or chocolate remained on the skin. What happens if wife says this: “Would you hand me the car keys, regurgitation of bees?” would that line mean the same as “honey”? Poetry is all around us, even though we don’t pay much attention to that fact.

One of the problems of course is that most people believe that language merely mirrors reality rather than creates it. Poets, if you read enough of them, use language creatively and, in a way, test the limits of language itself—especially in more modern forms of poetry.

LC: 573 (Yeats, “Sailing to Byzantium”)

Here we have a poem that deals with an old man’s journey from “that country” to a place he calls Byzantium. But in reading this poem, we don’t have to believe that he literally gets on a boat and travels to some port in the ancient Byzantine Empire; that would call for time travel, which in real-life is absolutely impossible. The poem itself expresses a highly imaginative and deep longing on the part of its speaker, but I’m sure we’ve all heard the expression, “Be careful of what you wish.” In lots of ways the journey detailed in the poem is a treacherous one and, if you are attentive to the language of the poem, you will come to see why.

So anyone who can produce a list of confusing bits or contradictions should bring that list to class for submission (**10 extra-credit points available**).

*******Due (Sat, 14 Feb by noon): Introductory Paragraph (50 pts)**

Week 6: 16-20 Feb

LC: 1173-74 (Ginsberg, “Supermarket in California”); LC: 565-67 (Plath, “Daddy”)

Both of these poems deal with what might be called antagonists: for Ginsberg, Walt Whitman; and for Plath, her father Otto. Both of these antagonists are already long-dead by the time the authors write their poems, in which the poets undertake a journey of sorts. Those journeys, as you will discover, are remarkably different and yet similar in certain respects.

Identify some figurative language (metaphors, e.g.) that you think especially important to understanding the conflict each faces (**up to 5 extra-credit points for each poem; total of 10**).

Week 7: 23-27 Feb

Mardi Gras (23 Feb until noon on 25 Feb) Buffer Days

Week 8: 2-6 March

Writing Process and Workshop: Body Paragraph (Model Interpretive Essay on Blackboard); bring draft of Body Paragraph to class on W/F 15, 17 Oct.

Use one of the introductions below as your lead-in to the FIRST body paragraph:

One considerable problem that the speaker in William Butler Yeats's "Sailing to Byzantium" faces turns on the existence of two countries, the unnamed one he simply identifies as "That country" and the second he styles "Byzantium." On the face of the evidence, the two exist as separate countries because he leaves the first and then gets on a boat to arrive at the second. But the physical geography that posits two discrete places in fact does not hold or apply in this poem. In truth, both countries are equally unreal and serve merely as projections for the speaker as places of desire, not places of nuts-and-bolts reality. Thus, in proceeding through the four stanzas of the poem, the poet seems to plot a personal progress and development—a passage from one location to the next—but that progress is merely an illusion because at the heart of the poem lies a personal struggle to transcend the limitations of time, space, and the mind that negotiates both. Although different words apply to Byzantium, the content of those words proves remarkably similar to the words the speaker uses to describe and define "That country." By the end of the poem, the speaker demonstrates, perhaps with no real knowledge of the

fact, that he has traveled nowhere because he has transcended nothing, including his own desire for a fuller and more satisfying life.

At first blush, Allen Ginsberg's "A Supermarket in California" offers little more than a curious jumble of words and images that has something to do with a supermarket. But, if we are attentive, that jumble transforms the ordinary—a trip to the supermarket—into something extraordinary—a journey into what it means for Ginsberg to be a poet. Before finding himself in the supermarket, however, he must first get to it and, after he is in it, he must then leave it. That process underscores the critical role the supermarket plays as a turning point in his development as a poet because while there he reveals what he has been "after" all along: Walt Whitman, the object of his pursuit. Nevertheless, Ginsberg can only pursue Whitman as a follower—he literally comes "after" him—for the simple reason that the latter is already dead by more than thirty years before Ginsberg is born. Yet by dealing with Whitman in the manner he does—as a type of ghostly obsession—Ginsberg gives himself the best chance he has to exercise his wings as a new poet in an altogether different cultural era of poetry.

Through her disturbing poem "Daddy," Sylvia Plath recounts the horrors of her life with father and her heroic search for an escape from him and the affliction he bred in her bones. Replete with ghastly images of one sort or another, the poem itself may cause some readers to shudder, but at another level it offers a fascinating history of the ways in which Plath, from her earliest years on, struggles to make sense of her father and to recreate him in order to rid herself of the paternal demon that possesses her. To be sure, part of her struggle stems from the finality of letting go itself, which she compounds by the uncertainty of her relationship to her now-dead father. Before his ghostly presence,

she seems at times, if not innocent, then at least naïve; at other times she knows the ways and practices of the world too well. Indeed, all the while she references the barbarism of the Nazi death camps she communicates this lesson to us in the rhythm of a nursery rhyme. Plath's struggle, in other words, divides her and divides her again. Her persistence marks her heroism, but heroes earn that status from the complications of their being. In her quest for liberation, Plath ends her journey not in certainty or assurance but in the conviction that she has undertaken her search as vigorously as her time and circumstances have allowed.

Week 9: 9-13 March

LC: 655-65 (Mason, "Shiloh"); LC: 407-18 (Oates, "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?")

You will find in Mason's story that we have a good deal of domestic strife, a kind of civil war, between husband and wife. Not all is well or happy for Leroy and Norma Jean. Yet, despite their troubles, the "warfare" between them remains below the surface, tucked away, and hidden--they speak to one another, to be sure, but they scarcely communicate at all. Let's see whether you can identify what gnaws away at one or both of these characters.

Oates writes one of the most recognizable types of stories with "Where": the initiation or coming-of-age story. Almost all fairy tales, for instance, are initiation stories, with "The Goose-Girl" as no exception. I don't want to suggest that "Where" is a modern-day fairy tale, though Oates herself has suggested that in part it is. Still, the strange and the improbably do have a large role to play in the story. Perhaps much easier to overlook in the story is Oates's dependence on two words: "as if." As you think about the large parts of the story: its type, characters, plot, conflicts, and so on, also think about those two words, "as if," and see whether you can determine what they are doing in the story.

*******Due (Thurs, 12 March by 5 pm): Body Paragraph (50 pts)**

Week 10: 16-20 March

This week we will work on an intro/body exercise; you will chose either the Mason or the Oates story for this exercise.

On **Monday**: bring a **draft of the introduction** to class.

On **Wednesday** bring a **draft of the first body paragraph** to class.

On **Friday** bring you **revised introduction and first body paragraph** to class.

Anyone who does not comply with these responsibilities will have a grade reduction on the submitted intro/body of **-3 pts. per missed draft. (Bring an extra copy of each draft and submit it to me during class.)**

*******Due** (Sat, 21 March 6 pm): Intro/Body (100 pts.)

Week 11: 23-27 March

Research Process:

Many people worldwide conduct literary research, and thousands of journals from across the globe specialize in the scholarship that focuses on literature. For any discipline (whether literature, history, psychology, business, or biology), students in the field or those with merely a passing or practical interest access information through Bibliographies. In literary studies the mother of all bibliographies is a work entitled the *MLA International Bibliography*. This work will serve as your entry point.

How to access the *MLA International Bibliography*? Go to Watson Library (NSU), which you can do electronically or, the old-fashioned way, by walking over there. You will find the *MLA Bibl.* under Databases; the list of databases is alphabetized, so simply scroll down. Click on *MLA International Bibliography* and a search box will come up. Enter the author's name or, if inclined, the title of the work (use quotation marks) or both. A list of citations will appear; read through it; and find a title or two of some interest. If you see the "full-text" designator next to the citation, then you can get that essay immediately simply by clicking the full-text feature; if the essay looks interesting, but full-text does not appear, you will have to check the holdings of the library to see whether we subscribe to that journal. If NSU does, then go to the library and the stacks so that you make a photocopy of the essay; if it does not, then you will have to order a copy via Interlibrary Loan, which you also access through the Watson site. **In all cases, keep good records or photocopies of the relevant bibliographic information that includes author, title of the work, publication information:** in practice, an MLA citation will look like this for a journal article: Burbick, Joan. "Emily Dickinson and the Economics of Desire." *American Literature* 58 (1986): 361-78. In other words: author; title of work; and publication information: the name of the journal, the volume number, the year of publication (set off in parentheses), and the inclusive pages (the pages that the essay takes up in the journal). Be mindful of the punctuation used as well.

In addition to *MLA Bibl.* other databases provide access to relevant scholarship: Academic Search Complete or JSTOR. In each instance look for full-text to save yourself a few steps. **Let me emphasize:** I want you to **read article-length essays first; you may**

consult notes later (notes will appear in journals that specialize in notes: e.g., Notes& Queries or Explicator. An article-length essay is many pages, not one or two, which is the length that characterizes a note. Any questions or problems, just give a holler.

Finally, **scholarly books** make up another important component of research (you will find these titles listed in the *MLA International Bibliography* as well). In many cases, you will have to order books through Interlibrary Loan, but before you do, be sure to check our holdings in the library.

“They Say/I Say” as the principal method of research

Preparation for Presentations: we will draw up a Schedule for the Oral Presentations that will occur over the next two weeks.

(available: 15 extra-credit points: due 27 March; I want you to read a scholarly essay from one of the databases and compare it to a treatment of the same topic you find on the web. The purpose of this exercise is for you to tell me the difference between a scholarly treatment of topic x and a web-based treatment of topic x. You must provide citations for both.)

Week 12: 30 March-3 April

Oral Research Presentations (of at least 3 pieces of scholarship) (50 pts)

These presentations are preliminary in nature, but they will also get you more seriously committed to the research process itself. As we conduct research and think with heightened degrees of concentration on research projects, sometimes, often in fact, our views change. Such changes are normal and perfectly acceptable. In your presentation, however, I will look for a couple of things: 1.) your ability to summarize the scholarship you have read (“they say”); and 2.) your ability to position what you want to say (“I say”) in relationship to the scholarship you have read.

Week 13: 6-10 April

*******Oral Research Presentations (of at least 3 pieces of scholarship) (50 pts)**

Before you go off for Thanksgiving Break, I want you to submit to me your **Research Problem**. This problem will reflect a more mature and better developed approach to the Research Essay you will submit by the end of the semester. In the Research Problem I expect to see essentially the same things I identify above under Week 12: Oral Research Presentation, except with a certainty and confidence that perhaps was missing the first time through.

*****I will accept the **Research Problem (100 pts)** until **noon** on **Sat, 11 Apr**

Spring Break begins on Fri, 10 April

Week 14: 13-17 April

Spring Break

Week 15: 20-24 April

Writing Process and Workshop: Drafting the Research Essay

Week 16: 27 April-1 May

Writing Process and Workshop (continued); instructions for **Final Exam (200 pts.; you will sit for the Final Exam on Monday, 4 May at 8 am)**, and farewell

*******Due** (no later than **Fri, 1 May at 6 pm**): **Research Essay (400 pts)**

Electronic Submission

In all cases be sure to **double-space** your submissions

Submit your work to the Blackboard portal for this course under Assignments; I will create a link for your convenience. Do NOT send your work to Digital Dropbox. After I read your work and comment on it, I return it to you via Blackboard.

You will have to create a file for each submission (**except for Extra-Credit work**, which you will give me during class; I accept no late Extra-Credit work). I also ask that in submitting your written work you name and submit your file accordingly: please use all **lower-case letters** and **use a space to separate surname from given name; see below**):

1. collab1.lastname firstname (of individual who makes the submission for the group; the names of all group members must appear on the submission itself; I will forward a copy to all members of the group)
2. collab2.lastname firstname (of individual who makes the submission for the group; the names of all group members must appear on the submission itself; I will forward a copy to all members of the group)
3. intro.lastname firstname
4. body.lastname firstname

5. introbody.lastname firstname

6. resproblem.lastname firstname

7. resessay.lastname firstname

Academic Honor Code / Plagiarism

University Statement on Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty is defined as the following: 1) acquiring or using a published test bank; 2) copying from another student's test, paper, or computer file; 3) using unauthorized materials during a test; 4) collaborating during a test with another person by giving or receiving information without authority; 5) stealing, buying, or otherwise obtaining non-administered or unauthorized tests; 6) selling or giving away non-administered or unauthorized tests; 7) bribing anyone to obtain information about a test; 8) substituting for another student or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a test; 9) submitting as your own, in fulfillment of academic requirements, any work prepared totally or in part by another; 10) supplying to another student any theme, report, or other work for use in fulfilling academic requirements; and 11) plagiarism, defined as the use of another person's work and the unacknowledged incorporations of that work in one's own work that is offered for credit.

Academic dishonesty will result in one of the following disciplinary measures to be decided by the course instructor: 1) verbal/written warning; 2) conference with department Chair or Dean; reduction of test/course grade to an F. A student may subsequently be placed on probation or suspended or expelled and forced to withdraw from Northwestern as a result of academic dishonesty.

Refer to the section in the Student Handbook concerning Academic Infractions and Sanctions for Academic Misconduct.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism occurs when you have taken the words from a published source and use those words, without quotation marks and attribution, as your own; **plagiarism** also occurs when you **paraphrase** words you have found in a published source and employ that paraphrase in your essay without citation; finally, **plagiarism** occurs when you have read a source, found a useful **idea** in it, and represent that idea as your idea. Quite simply, **plagiarism** corrupts the environment in which we live and work and renders your pursuit of an education profoundly dishonest. **FAIR WARNING: those who plagiarize will receive a zero (0) for that assignment and be dropped from the course, for which they will receive the grade of F. Under no circumstances do I allow students to redo plagiarized work.**

When, on the other hand, we have fellow students or instructors look at and offer advice about what we have already written, that is not plagiarism. That is called **collaborative learning**.

N.B.: if I discover plagiarism after I have read your work and returned it to you, I reserve the right to fail such efforts.

Civility / Courtesy

University Statement on Civility:

Each Northwestern State University student is encouraged to help create an environment that promotes learning, dignity, and mutual respect for everyone in the learning environment. Students who speak at inappropriate times, take frequent breaks, interrupt the class by coming to class late or leaving early, engage in loud or distracting behaviors, use cell phones or pagers (other noise-making devices such as watches with alarms), listen to headphones/CDs, play with computers or hand-held games, use inappropriate language, are verbally abusive, display defiance or disrespect to others, or behave aggressively toward others during the class period may be asked to leave the class and subjected to disciplinary action under the Northwestern State University Student Code of Conduct and Sanctions (Article VII Sanctions). The instructor of a course may deem additional behaviors or actions inappropriate; these actions or behaviors will be outlined in the course syllabus, though not all can be anticipated. Copies of the infractions and sanctions are available on the NSU web site at <http://www.nsula.edu/studenthandbook/page100.htm>.

Courtesy:

1. Be in your seat before I call the roll. **Those who come in after I finish calling roll must appear before me at the end of class to announce their tardiness, which will be duly marked as such.** Three occasions of tardy equal one absence.
2. **Cell phones, beepers, and/or pagers must be turned off and put away before** you enter the classroom. If I see anyone with a cell phone, etc. on the desk, in the hand, or any other visible location, I will ask that student to leave the room and will mark him or her as absent. So for your sake and the sake of the class, put cell phones, etc. in your backpack and leave them there until class is over.
3. Do not engage in disruptive or unseemly behavior; treat your classmates with respect, even though you may disagree with something a classmate says. Be diplomatic and remember the Golden Rule. Off-task chit-chat is highly disruptive and offensive.

Essays and Research Project

The nature of all serious interpretive thinking is that people will disagree with what you offer or have to say. Never worry about that fact. The important thing you need to do is to trust your ability as a thinker and to learn the techniques that thinkers and writers employ to become more persuasive in their arguments. It will be my job to help you with these matters. Be sure, in the process, that whatever you submit to me is your own work, not someone else's; this principle also applies to research writing. The only difference you need to bear in mind about research writing is that you are entering what is often a long and elaborate conversation about how individuals have responded to an issue or problem. Some of you, moreover, may have an irrational dislike for literature in all its forms, but what you learn and are asked to do in this course—learning how to weigh and evaluate evidence and to think independently—will serve you well in the other courses you take at NSU because, once you are graduated from this institution, the assumption your employer will make is that you know how to think through the problems that surface in your area of specialization. Thinking, I assure you, is the same in one area as it is in the next.

Invariably students will ask how long the essay has to be. My answer is always the same: as long as it needs to be—neither too short nor too long. Your only job is to flesh out the implications of your thesis, which will determine length for you. And because we are now out of high school, we can all put the five-paragraph essay to rest

Your **research essay**, which we will work through in stages, requires you to track down several (**at least 4**) scholarly sources relevant to the essay you write. Remember that just because something has been published on a story or poem does not mean that it is gospel truth—it is only learned opinion. To repeat myself: scholars, thinkers, and others who are educated disagree all the time.

Preparation and Participation

A **prepared student** is one who has done the reading assignment **before** arriving in class.

Much of what goes on in this class will be an exchange between you and me. As such, those who participate in class discussion will be duly noted and will earn participation points, which will be added to the cumulative point total of your written work.

Attendance

An important part of your responsibility is to attend class, which is why NSU has an attendance policy. You are, however, allotted **8 absences without penalty**—if you are determined to use them, then use them wisely. If you have a medical condition that requires repeated visits to the doctor, then be sure to make appointments that will not have you missing this class again and again.

Excused Absences: These absences are only for those students who are engaged in university business and are not treated as an absence. I will need original documentation from the university office overseeing your absence.

Excessive Absence and Penalty: Those who miss **6 classes by the end of the sixth week** of the semester (**3 Oct**) will be dropped by me from the class. Any student who misses class for a **ninth** time will be dropped from the class at any point in the semester.

Grading Policies / Grading Scale / Other Grading Issues

Grading Policies:

To receive a passing grade in this course, students must complete and submit **all the assigned essays** and sit for the **final examination**. Those students who do not fulfill this obligation will receive the grade of F.

Because English 1020 stresses the importance of interpretive argumentation, the grades students receive are a function of how well they can demonstrate their ability to argue a particular line of inquiry. A-level essays will have a thoughtful thesis that is well-developed and supported uniformly throughout with specific forms of evidence. In addition, an A-level writer will write clearly, grammatically, and with a sense of style. A C-level essay, by contrast, may, for example, have a marginal thesis, use insufficient evidence, depend upon unsupported generalizations, display its author's insufficient grasp of grammatical structures or forms, or exhibit a cramped sense of writing style.

Grading Scale:

Point breakdown as indicated under Schedule.

Participation: I keep records for participation; those who participate will receive additional points added to their point totals for their semester work.

Total: 1000 pts: 895=A; etc. If you receive the equivalent of 89.5, 79.5, 69.5, or 59.5, you get bumped up to the next level.

Late Work:

Essays are due as indicated under **Schedule**. Those essays submitted late will be docked points, but I reserve the right to use my discretion in all cases. Remember, that if you fail to submit even one of the required essays, you cannot pass the course.

Incompletes:

Occasionally it is necessary to administer the grade of I (signifying that the semester work remains unfinished), but only under special circumstances. I determine the legitimacy of an incomplete petition on a case-by-case basis. If a student receives a grade of I, then that student has only a limited period of time in which to complete the work for the course and needs to be mindful of that fact.

Disability Statement

It is the policy of NSU to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal law, state law, and the University's commitment to equal educational opportunities. Any student with a disability who needs accommodations, for example, in seating placement or in arrangements for examinations, should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Services for Students with Disabilities, which is located in Kyser Hall, Room 237, telephone 357-6050 or (TTD) 357-4393.